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ABSTRACT

This study is concerned with determining from a comparison of terminal attitudes and behavior what changes, if any, occur in student and supervising teachers when they are paired according to divergent attitude scores. The Minnesota Teacher Attitude Inventory (MTAI) was administered to teacher supervisors and student teachers before the semester began to determine appropriate pairings of divergent scores. The MTAI was administered at the semester's end, along with the Purdue Student Teacher Opinionnaire and two specially prepared check sheets. The results of this study indicated the following: a) reciprocity in attitudinal effect on student teachers and supervising teachers in either direction occurred only in individual instances; b) although there were no significant changes in pre- and post-test mean scores, there were significant differences noted for individual pairings; and c) generally, neither supervising teacher attitudes nor student teacher attitudes were affected by each other. Recommendations from the study include joint presemester encounter and human relations training for both groups and in-service education programs for supervising teachers, with a greater emphasis on affective skill development. (JA)

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RECIPROCAL EFFECTS OF SUPERVISING TEACHER AND STUDENT TEACHER ATTITUDES

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THE PROBLEM

There is growing concern among educators, especially those responsible for providing laboratory experiences for student teachers, about processes to assess and determine means by which the student teaching experience might increasingly reflect, and become more responsive to, the incessant demands for relevance both in the classroom and out. In years past, much attention was focused on developing intellectual or cognitive skills of novice teachers. It has only been in recent years that similar attention has been focused on attributes of the beginning teacher that are primarily affectively oriented. While there have been numerous studies concerned with relationships between student teacher attitudes before and after an initial teaching experience, Day (1), and between student teachers on different teaching levels and in varying subject areas, Callis (2), there have been however, few studies dealing with the attitudinal relationship which exists between student teachers and

their supervising teachers. Bennie (3) suggests that a warm, human climate can exist only if student teachers and cooperating teachers are matched. Hayes' (4) findings indicate that "'cooperating teacher-student teacher' matches appear feasible and appear promising in improving student-teacher attitudes although predispositions of student teachers are clearly more important than external influences during the intern period."

This study, made possible by a grant from the Graduate Research Committee, Texas Southern University, Houston, Texas, was concerned with determining what changes, if any, occurred in the attitudes of supervising teachers and student teachers as they interacted during two different time periods. If changes were noted, in which direction did they move? In other words, if a student teacher and a supervising teacher are paired based on divergent attitude scores how will they compare at the end?

The following null hypotheses were generated:

1. Supervising teacher attitudes do not significantly change due to student teacher attitudes.

2. Student teacher attitudes do not significantly change due to supervising teacher attitudes.

These hypotheses were tested for significance at the P=.05 level of confidence.

SUBJECTS AND PROCEDURES

During the Fall semester, 1970-71, the Minnesota Teacher Attitude Inventory (MTAI) was administered to each supervising teacher to whom student teachers had been assigned. These supervising teachers also served as supervisors for the Spring semester student teachers. In order to proceed with the study which paired supervising teachers and student teachers with divergent scores, the MTAI was then administered. Spring semester student teachers were administered the MTAI at the beginning of the semester. From the forty-three secondary level supervising teachers asked to participate in the study, eight were selected and paired with Spring semester student teachers having divergent scores. (The difference range in these pairings was 17 to 94 points). Of the fifty-one elementary level supervising teachers who agreed to assist in the study, ten were selected and paired with student teachers with divergent scores. (The difference range in these pairings was 11 to 82 points). All supervising teachers were between the age of thirty-six and forty-five years. Of the ten elementary supervising teachers included in the study, five or 50% had one to five years of teaching experience. There was, however, greater diversity in the years of teaching experience among the eight secondary supervising teachers included in the study. All student teachers were Black. Twelve of the

eighteen supervising teachers were Anglo and six were Black. There were three Black and five Anglo supervising teachers on the secondary level and three Black and seven Anglos on the elementary level.

Secondary teachers and student teachers were paired for eight weeks. Elementary pairings lasted fourteen weeks. At the conclusion of both periods another form of the MTAI, modified with the assistance of Dr. Robert Callis, one of the developers of the instrument, was administered to both paired groups. As an added means of assessing possible relationships, two specially devised check sheets were used. One asked for information about the teacher such as: age range, sex, years of teaching experience, race, and economic level of the school community. The other check sheet requested information about the socio-psychological climate of the teacher's classroom and the academic level of her students. The Purdue Student Teacher Opinionaire (PS-TO), which in factor analyzed form assesses student teacher morale in ten critical areas, was also used as a post-test instrument.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table I shows pre and post-test and difference scores for the student teachers and supervising teachers included in the study. An assessment of this table reveals a distinct similarity between the gains

Table 1

SUPERVISING TEACHER AND STUDENT TEACHER PRE-TEST, POST TEST AND DIFFERENCE SCORES (PAIRINGS)

Supervising Teachers

(Elementary)	MTAI Pre-Test	Post Test	Diff	(Elementary)	MTAI Pre-Test	Post Test	Diff
1	58	72	14	1	24	37	13
2	51	75	24	2	18	35	17
3	59	45	-14	3	19	3	-16
4	34	23	-11	4	79	59	-20
5	26	29	3	5	98	78	-20
6	13	32	19	6	64	68	4
7	34	31	-3	7	18	-6	-24
8	71	70	-1	8	60	41	-19
9	28	41	13	9	51	12	-39
10	44	42	-2	10	-38	-48	-10
(Secondary)				(Secondary)			
1	21	8	-13	1	43	47	4
2	54	82	28	2	-5	-7	-2
3	14	4	-10	3	-9	-17	-8
4	38	29	-9	4	-56	-62	-6
5	-18	8	26	5	32	45	13
6	-3	33	36	6	43	20	-23
7	28	5	-23	7	11	32	21
8	87	94	7	8	46	46	0

and losses of secondary level student teachers and supervising teachers scores. The elementary pairings show more dissimilarity in difference scores. Specifically, seven of the eighteen pairs show a concomitant loss over the respective period of time of the study; two pairs on the secondary level and five on the elementary level.

The greatest loss experienced by a secondary student teacher was one paired with an Anglo supervising teacher. Although the student teacher showed a loss, the supervising teacher, who was Anglo, reflected the greatest gain. (See secondary pair # 6, Table I.) Further assessment showed that the secondary student teacher who had the greatest gain was paired with the supervising teacher who registered the greatest loss. This supervising teacher was also Anglo. (See secondary pair # 7, Table I.) Both of the above pairings were in the area of business education. While there are obviously no reciprocal effects apparent in these pairings, a striking divergence did occur.

In Table II supervising teachers generally tended to show a greater degree of consistency in attitudinal posture than did student teachers. (Also see Table I) While secondary level student teachers scores tended to vary in the same direction as that of their supervising teachers, elementary student teachers experienced greater loss than did their supervising teachers.

Table II

SUPERVISING TEACHERS AND STUDENT TEACHERS
GAIN AND LOSS BY LEVEL

	N	Elementary			Secondary		
		Gain	Loss	No Gain	Gain	Loss	No Gain
Supervising Teachers	18	5	5	0	4	4	0
Student Teachers	18	3	7	0	3	4	1

The results shown in Table 3 indicate that Hypothesis One, which stated "supervising teachers attitudes do not change significantly due to student teachers attitudes," was supported. Hypothesis Two stated "student teachers attitudes do not change significantly due to supervising teacher attitudes." Hypothesis Two was supported.

Table III

RESULTS OF PRE AND POST-TESTS OF
SUPERVISING TEACHERS AND STUDENT TEACHERS

	N	Pre Test Mean	Post Test Mean	Mean Differ-ence	"t"	Level of Signifi-cance
Supervising Teachers	18	35.5	40.2	-4.7	1.25	N. S.
Student Teachers	18	27.7	21.3	6.4	1.62	N. S.

Because the two foregoing instances represent the widest divergence in gain or loss scores on the secondary level, a closer look at other aspects of these student teachers, their supervising teachers and the school setting including the pupils with whom they interact may be revealing. To accomplish this the two supplementary information sheets about classroom climate and age and years of teaching experience of supervising teachers indicated that the supervising teacher who showed a gain was between 56 and 65 years of age, had been teaching between 6 and 10 years and assessed her pupils as being friendly, cooperative, of average academic ability and were generally from low income or poverty areas. The student teacher paired with this teacher experienced a loss. She was 37 years of age and worked irregular hours during student teaching which caused problems with her supervising teacher due to tardiness. Conversations with the student teacher periodically during the experience revealed that the supervising teacher would not permit her to assume the degree of responsibility of the total class load she felt capable of assuming.

The supervising teacher whose difference score indicated a loss was between 36 and 45 years of age and had been teaching less than

five years. Information regarding her class was not available nor was there additional information on the student teacher.

Relative to possible reciprocal effects of these pairings, it might be concluded from the foregoing that there was little reciprocity evident.

A similar assessment of the elementary level pairings indicated that proportionately, there appeared to be a greater degree of discontinuity between the elementary pairings than those of the secondary level. Of the ten (10) pairs the two with the greatest degree of divergence were the ninth pair. The student teacher in this pairing experienced the greatest loss of all elementary pairings. The supervising teacher's post-test score increased 13 points over the pre-test.

The Purdue Student Teacher Opinionaire (PSTO) was used to assess specific areas of classroom interaction between student teachers, their supervising teachers, the principal, other teachers and their students. The PSTO profile results of the two student teachers who experienced the greatest gain and greatest loss supported the MTAI post-test results. The student teachers with the greatest gain registered profiles at the 99th percentile concerning Rapport with Supervising Teacher, the 85th percentile relative to Rapport with Principal, the 95th percentile

regarding Rapport with Students and at the 67th percentile concerning Rapport with Other Teachers. The student teacher with the greatest loss had a profile at the 1st percentile regarding Rapport with Supervising Teacher; the 23rd percentile, Rapport with Principal; the 52nd percentile, Rapport with Students and at the 13th percentile regarding Rapport with Other Teachers. The PSTO profile results generally supported the MTAI post-test findings. A profile percentile rank less than fifty was considered reflective of low morale or rapport.

CONCLUSIONS

The findings of this study indicated that:

1. Reciprocity in attitudinal effect on student teachers and supervising teachers in either direction occurred only in individual instances.

2. Although there were no significant changes in pre and post-test mean scores, there were significant differences noted for individual pairings.

3. Generally, supervising teacher attitudes were not significantly affected by student teacher attitudes.

4. Generally, student teacher attitudes were not significantly affected by supervising teacher attitudes.

5. The difference in the length of the student teaching experience was not a significant factor in the study.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Student teachers and supervising teachers to whom they are being assigned should be brought together in encounter and human relations training groups prior to the actual student teaching experience. There is probably a more critical need for such training when student teachers are placed in cross-over situations.

2. Inservice education programs for supervising teachers should include in addition to activities that are cognitively oriented a greater emphasis on affective skill development, i.e., interpersonal skill development through problem-solving, case study methods, role playing, etc.

3. This study should be expanded to include a check for the effects of differences in race and age and to look more critically at elementary level pairings or matching of student teachers and supervising teachers.

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